



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

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Attorney Charged With Smuggling Drugs Into Jail

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles attorney is awaiting arraignment on conspiracy and other charges involving an alleged attempt to smuggle heroin inside a greeting card to one of his clients incarcerated in county jail, the District Attorney's Office announced today.

Stephen Beecher, 61 (4-24-51), was arrested April 9 on a felony complaint for arrest warrant charging him with two counts of conspiracy to commit a crime, one felony count of bringing drugs into jail, one felony count of transportation of a controlled substance and one felony count of bringing a firearm into a jail.

Deputy District Attorney Arisa Mattson, with the Justice System Integrity Division, said Beecher, a Sherman Oaks resident, was released early this morning after posting bail. He is scheduled to be arraigned on May 1 at the Criminal Courts Building, Department 30.

Two co-defendants are charged with Beecher in case BA409719. Jesus Antonio Duenas, 20, Beecher's client who is in custody on an attempted murder case, pleaded not guilty today to two counts of conspiracy. Duenas' girlfriend, Jessica Paredes, 19, pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to the same two counts.

The complaint alleges Beecher told Duenas he would visit the North County Correctional Facility on Dec. 28, 2012. Duenas then made an arrangement with an unknown female co-conspirator to bring drugs for himself and for "the Southside," a criminal enterprise that controls the drugs and other illegal activity inside jails, through Beecher.

The complaint also alleges that Paredes "ironed and flattened" packages of heroin to fit inside a greeting card envelope and then gave Beecher the greeting card containing 36.09 grams of heroin.

Beecher was arrested on Dec. 28 in the visiting area of North County Correctional Facility with two packages of heroin worth more than \$30,000, the complaint alleges.

Duenas and Paredes return to court on April 24 to set a date for their preliminary hearing.

If convicted, Beecher is facing 11 years in state prison. Duenas and Paredes are facing nine years each in state prison.